

BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROPOSED ACTION SCOPING DOCUMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Bitterroot National Forest is proposing changes to summer and winter motorized recreational use on specific roads, trails and areas within the non-wilderness portion of the Forest. Figure 1 shows the project area and vicinity map for this planning effort. Changes to the existing motorized recreation use, when implemented, will result in clear, standardized designations of where motorized recreation is appropriate, sustainable and desirable on the Bitterroot National Forest.

This proposed action is NOT a decision; it is a STARTING POINT.

This proposed action is the **first step** in our National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental analysis process¹. We recognize that not all of the issues expressed to date have been resolved with this proposal and that many people have not provided input yet. Issues that are unresolved, or that emerge as a result of public review of this document will be addressed by modifying this proposal and through the development of alternatives that will be analyzed and compared in an Environmental Impact Statement. We look forward to working with you to define future travel management for the Forest. The project's timeline is:

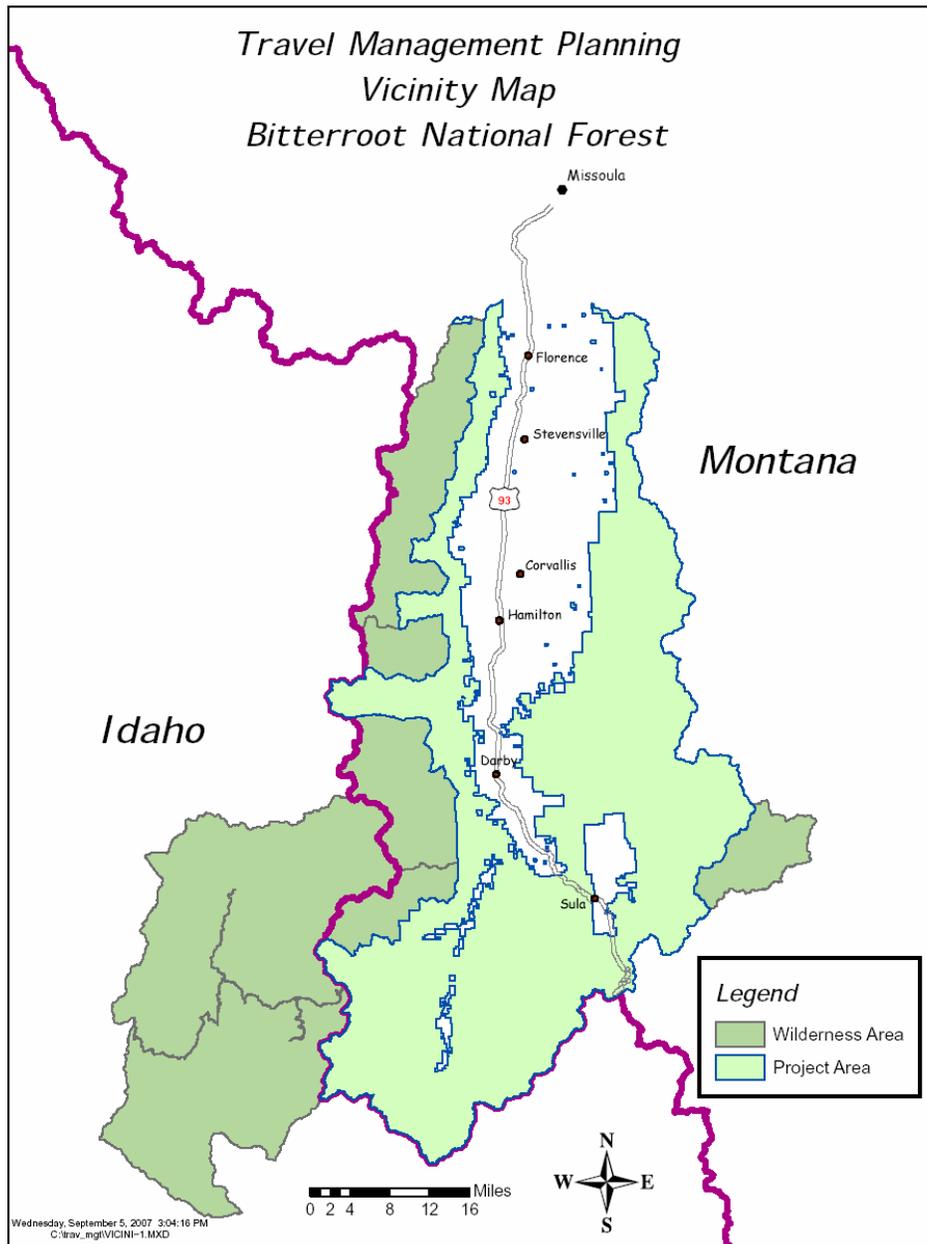
September 2007	Scoping – Request Public Input on Proposed Action
August 2008	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
May 2009	Final Environmental Impact Statement
December 2009	Motor Vehicle Use Map Available for the Public

The motor vehicle use map will be updated and published annually, so travel planning will be ongoing.

For clarity and common understanding we have defined some terms used in this document in a [glossary](#) located in the last section of this document. These terms have different meanings to different individuals. The definitions in our glossary are strictly to clarify the use of these terms for this specific project. Words found in the glossary are in [green italicized and underlined text](#) the first time they appear after the introduction.

¹ Some members of the public expressed concern that the release of the proposed action may hamper the collaborative discussions being convened by some quiet users and motorized users. We encourage any parties who are working toward solutions that meet various interests to continue their efforts. Solutions that incorporate the interests of the diverse parties will be given strong consideration by the Forest.

Figure 1. Project Area and Vicinity Map



2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

Why here, why now? The Bitterroot National Forest is initiating travel management planning at this time for three primary reasons identified as the “purpose and need” in Table 1. These needs led to the objectives we are striving to accomplish through this proposed action. Table 1 summarizes this information and then we elaborate on the needs below.

Table 1. Purpose and Need and Project Objectives.

Purpose and Need	Project Objectives
<p>Several issues concerning motorized use have led to multiple requests for change from the public and Forest staff. The issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users, • quality of recreational experience, and • resource considerations 	<p>Change the existing motorized recreation <i>designations</i> to provide quality motorized recreation experiences while protecting natural resources and providing non-motorized recreation opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide motorized loop routes that offer a quality recreational experience, with the focus on using old roads and linkages with only minor resource impacts. • Provide <i>areas for non-motorized recreation</i> experiences. • Close routes to motorized use that have resource concerns that can't reasonably be mitigated • Close routes that offer little value as a motorized experience and have resource concerns.
<p>In some locations it is difficult to know where and when motorized use can legally occur and what types of vehicles are allowed</p>	<p>Clarify and simplify the motor vehicle use designations.</p>
<p>The 2005 Travel Management Rule requires the <i>designate</i> of <i>roads, trails</i> and areas that are open to <i>motor vehicles</i></p>	<p>Comply with the 2005 Travel Management Rule².</p>

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND ISSUES

The Forest has ongoing working relationships with several recreation groups who have partnered in the maintenance, upkeep and monitoring of some of the National Forest's roads and trails they enjoy. Through this work we have learned of some issues and concerns. We look forward to continuing those partnerships and fostering new and diverse alliances as a by-product of this planning effort.

The Forest has held numerous public meetings throughout the Bitterroot Valley to revise the 1987 Forest Plan. Community groups composed of people with diverse viewpoints gathered in 2004 and 2005 to see if they could reach consensus on issues related to revision of the Forest Plan. Small groups involved in this process spent a great deal of time discussing travel management issues, and some groups did agree on specific ideas³. Although a new Forest Plan has not yet been approved or finalized, we have incorporated many of the ideas that received multi-party support into this proposed action.

Starting in the fall of 2006 Forest managers have attended approximately eleven meetings with various user groups⁴ to gather input on their current recreational use, listen to their ideas related to non-motorized

² 36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, and 295. Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use; Final Rule

³ For more information on the Forest Plan Revision go to <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/wmpz/>

⁴ Ravalli County Off-Road Users Association; Selway-Pintler Chapter Backcountry Horsemen; Quiet Users; National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council; Coalition of Quiet Users including members from the Friends of the Bitterroot, Wildlands CPR, Sierra Club, Montana Wilderness Association, and Backcountry Horseman;

and motorized recreation, and discuss the upcoming process. Forest managers have attended several meetings convened by some quiet users and motorized users who have been discussing where there might be common ground. We've received approximately ten letters and user created reports with input for consideration during the same time period. We have also had meetings with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; County Commissioners; State elected officials; and Department of Natural Resources; and have initiated communications with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. **We consider this input preliminary and just the start of the broader public engagement that will occur** through the NEPA process; nonetheless, the information was very valuable in identifying issues the public would like us to address in the development of this proposed action.

Some of the issues expressed during our discussions with the public to date are listed below. Many of these have translated into the objectives for this project.

- Resource concerns including effects to wildlife and streams.
- Growing off-highway vehicle use on the Forest
- Inadequate quality of experience for off highway vehicle use; in particular "time in the saddle" with additional loop opportunities
- Retention or increase in non-motorized use experience
- Retention or increase in motorized access
- User conflicts
- Economically sustainable system of roads and trails
- Promotion and enforcement of appropriate use.

Through this input the public has requested numerous changes to the existing recreation motorized access including: opening routes currently closed to motorized use; closing routes and areas currently open to motorized use; and, retaining routes currently open. Additionally changes to the types of vehicles allowed on certain routes have been requested. Forest staff also recommended changes to provide additional resource protection or to enhance recreational experiences.

CLARIFY AND SIMPLIFYING DESIGNATIONS

Currently, the motorized recreation designations can be confusing and complex. It is difficult for the public, and at times for agency staff, to determine what actions are legal and what actions are not. This can be frustrating to a law abiding recreationist who wants to know where and when they can use their motorized vehicle on the National Forest and frustrating to non-motorized recreationists who would like to know where they can enjoy a non-motorized experience without encountering motorized users.

Foremost among the causes of this confusion and complexity may be the 2001 Tri-State Off-Highway-Vehicle Rule⁵ which prohibits motorized cross-country travel. Unauthorized or user-created trails already in existence were not restricted. Which routes fall into this category is difficult to determine or defend by users and the Forest Service alike. This confusion will be eliminated with this project by clearly designating those routes deemed appropriate and sustainable for motorized use regardless of their date of origin. Another example of complexity is the number of different seasonal closures on the Forest, often to protect the same resource values. The current Forest Visitors and Travel Plan Maps have seven different seasonal restriction dates that are broken out into twenty three different legend categories. Where it is possible to protect the resource values, allow for appropriate motorized uses, and "lump" seasons, the project will do so.

Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association; Bitterroot Ridge Runners. Some groups were met with more than once.

⁵ 2001 Off-Highway Vehicle Record of Decision and Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota and Portions of South Dakota.

The proposed action will simplify the motor vehicle designations (clearly show what is open to motorized use, and limit the number of different seasons of use), making it easier for compliance and enforcement.

THE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT RULE

The Travel Management Rule issued in 2005 requires all National Forests to identify those roads, trails and areas open to motorized vehicle use on a map to be published annually. The Chief of the Forest Service directed all units to have this map published and available to the public by December 2009. The Forest is initiating travel management planning to comply with this important direction.

3.0 EXISTING CONDITION

The Bitterroot National Forest Visitor and Travel Plan Maps, issued on July 15, 2005 (with 6/7/07 errata), identify current road, trail and area restrictions for motorized vehicles. The maps (one for the north half of the Forest includes the Stevensville and Darby Ranger Districts and one for the south half includes the Sula and West Fork Ranger Districts) are available for sale at every District Ranger Station and the Forest Supervisor's Office. These maps display the existing condition for motorized recreation use with three exceptions (2001 Tri-State Off-Highway-Vehicle Decision, Trail 313 and Code "90" routes) which are explained below.

The 2005 Travel Management Rule directs the Forest Service to specifically designate those roads, trails and areas that are open to motorized use, rather than our current practice of showing both restricted and open information. For this reason the proposed action maps use the new, nationally standardized designations for what is open.

2001 TRI-STATE OFF-HIGHWAY-VEHICLE DECISION

In January 2001, the Regional Forester signed an [*off-highway vehicle*](#) (OHV) decision that "restricts yearlong, wheeled vehicle motorized cross country travel where it is not already restricted...".

[*Unauthorized routes*](#), including [*user-created*](#) roads or trails existing at the time the decision was signed, and not closed by specific restrictions, continued to be open to motorized use until route designation (the process we are initiating) occurs. This means that the existing routes that are open to motorized use include these unauthorized routes. A complete inventory of all unauthorized routes has not occurred, nor is it practical or necessary to map these routes as part of travel planning⁶. For these reasons these routes are not on the existing condition maps.

TRAIL 313

The Bitterroot/Rock Creek Divide Trail #313 was constructed in the early 1900's to provide access for fire protection and to several fire lookouts along the divide. This trail historically traversed much of the length of the Sapphire crest from Eightmile Saddle to the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness.

Tread width along the trail varies from full-size vehicle width to single track with roads replacing some portions of the trail. The terrain varies from wide open ridge tops to steep timbered sections, lending itself to a variety of recreational experiences.

⁶ 36 CFR Public Comments on Proposed Rule and Department Responses

The trail crosses back and forth along the divide and is alternately on the Bitterroot, Beaverhead-Deerlodge, and Lolo national forests along most of its length.

Designation of where motorized use is allowed on Trail 313 has a complicated history which has resulted in confusion and conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users.

We acknowledge and understand that people have different understandings of what the existing motorized use condition is for Trail 313; accepting that fact, for this project the July 15, 2005 Forest Plan Visitor Map and Travel Plan represents the existing condition.

CODE “90” ROUTES

The Forest Visitor’s Map does not show a class of routes that are closed to full size vehicles and are open to 50” vehicles or less. We refer to these routes as “90” routes here because that is how they have historically been coded in our internal records. These routes may or may not be gated. These routes are included as part of the existing condition and do appear on the proposed action maps.

4.0 THE PROPOSED ACTION

PROPOSED ACTION DEVELOPMENT

To develop the proposed action the interdisciplinary team of Forest specialists:

- Examined the existing travel management directions⁷;
- Assembled and considered public input including:
 - Approximately 650 route specific requests for changes, inclusion of specific user-created routes, or changes in vehicle types allowed.
 - Changes supported by multiple parties during the Forest Plan Revision process;
 - Changes suggested by Forest managers based on resource considerations or recreation opportunities
- Screened potential changes considering: legal consistency; potential resource impacts or benefits of adopting the change (based on existing resource data); and, what the value of the route as a motorized recreation opportunity. Strong consideration was given to changes supported by multiple parties with multiple interests during the Forest Plan Revision process.

The coarse filter screening criteria considered by the interdisciplinary team are available in Appendix C and a complete list of the screening results is available on the Forest’s Travel Management Planning web site. District Rangers made the determinations on what would be included in the proposed action for their respective Districts, with a review by the Forest Supervisor.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING CONDITION

Proposed changes are displayed on two maps for each Ranger District. One map displays *snowmobile* designations and the second map displays wheeled motorized use designations. These maps are available at our web site http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/projects/motorized_rec.shtml and in the scoping package CD ROM – Maps 1 - 8. A printed full set of the maps is available for review at the Forest Supervisor’s Office, each District Office and at the public libraries in Darby, Hamilton, Stevensville and Missoula.

⁷ Including, but not necessarily limited to: 1987 Forest Plan, 2005 Forest Visitor’s Map, 2005 Travel Management Rule, 2001 Tri-State Off-Highway Vehicle Decision.

As noted above in the existing condition section, the proposed action and all alternative maps will show where wheeled motorized recreation use would be allowed (rather than where it would be restricted). The snowmobile designations will continue to show areas and routes that are closed to snowmobile use as well as marked and groomed routes.

No new construction is proposed in the proposed action and 0.3 miles of unauthorized / user created trail would be relocated. The proposed changes from the existing condition for the total miles open to wheeled motorized access are summarized in Table 2 and the vehicle types for the open routes are compared in Table 3. All miles and acres in this document are approximations. Figure 2 displays the percentages of open and closed routes in the existing condition and proposed action and shows the percentages of open route by vehicle type. For the proposed action we used the vehicle classes that have been standardized nationally. Some members of the public asked us to add different vehicle classification types. We did not include new vehicle classifications in this proposed action to be consistent with the national standardizations and to retain simplicity in the classifications. Appendix A details the proposed changes to wheeled motorized access and the rationale behind each change.

Table 4 compares the area available for non-motorized recreation, based on a half mile buffer around all motorized routes⁸, between the existing condition and the proposed action. We show acres of non-motorized recreation available within the project area (non-wilderness) and also show the acres Forest-wide (wilderness included).

Table 2. Comparison of Proposed and Existing Miles Open and Closed to Wheeled Motorized Access within the Project Area

Vehicle Class and Season availability	Existing Condition (Miles)	Proposed Action (Miles)	Net Change (Miles)
Total Routes open to motorized vehicles ⁹	2,851	2,487	-364
Total Routes closed to motorized vehicles	1,906	2,270	+364
TOTAL MILES of ROUTES	4,757	4,757	

Table 3. Comparison of Proposed and Existing Wheeled Motorized Access by Vehicle Type.

Vehicle Class and Season availability	Existing Condition (Miles)	Proposed Action (Miles)	Net Change
Routes Open To Motorized Access	2,851	2,487	-364
Unauthorized / user created routes that were screened ¹⁰	166	0	-166
Roads open to all vehicles, Yearlong or Seasonal (Mixed-Motorized)	10	25	15
Roads open to <i>highway legal vehicle</i> only, Yearlong or Seasonal	1523	1479	-44
Trails open to <i>vehicles 50"</i> or less in width, Yearlong or Seasonal	717	746	29
Trails open to <i>motorcycles</i> , Yearlong or Seasonal	435	237	-198

⁸ USDA 1982.

⁹ As explained in the existing condition, all unauthorized or user-created routes that currently remain open under the 2001 Tri-State Rule are not included in existing condition miles unless they were recommended and reviewed in the initial screening process.

¹⁰ One hundred and sixty six miles of unauthorized/user created routes were screened. Of those 17 miles are proposed for motorized access (15 miles for 50" or less vehicles, 2 miles for motorcycles); the rest are proposed for non-motorized use.

Figure 2. Graphic Comparison of Proposed and Existing Route Openings by Vehicle Type

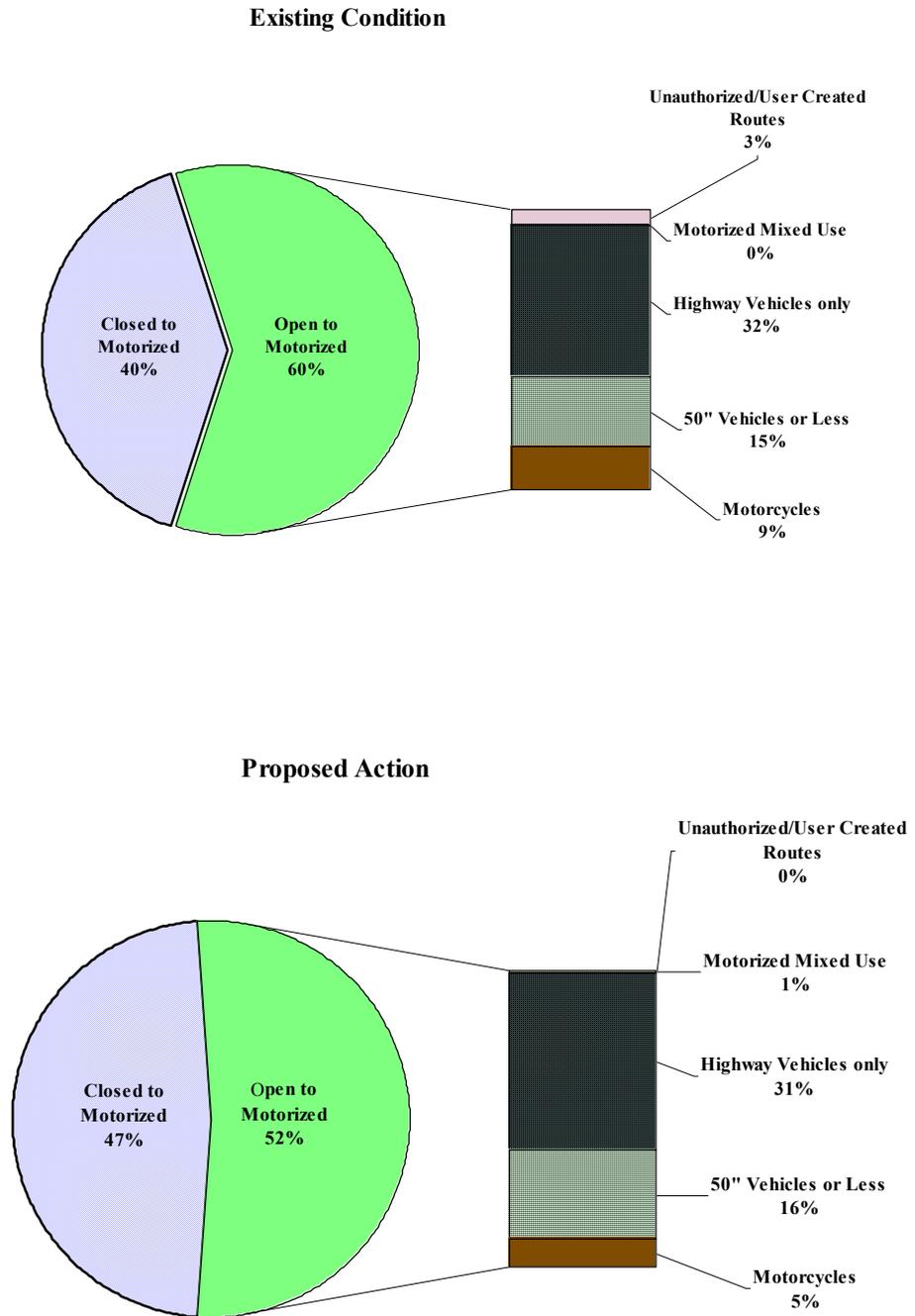


Table 4. Comparison of Proposed Acres Available for Non-Motorized Use (1/2 mile or more from wheeled motorized use designations) and the Existing Condition.

Area	Existing Condition		Proposed Action		Net Change (Acres)
	Acres	% of Area ¹¹	Acres	% of Area	
Project Area - Non-motorized areas (Excludes Wilderness)	268,061	32%	320,652	38%	+6%
Forest Wide – Non-motorized areas (Includes Wilderness)	973,512	61%	1,030,405	65%	+4%

The basis for the largest proportion of the proposed changes to wheeled motorized use is twofold:

- Eliminating motorized use on trails that are within a short distance of a designated wilderness. Multiple parties with varied interests believed these routes were not the right setting for motorized use and supported their closure during public meetings.
- Closing trails within selected unroaded areas to protect wilderness characteristics (areas the Forest would like to recommend for wilderness designation).

Other changes are inclusion of user-created routes or other unauthorized routes formerly closed to motorized use that could provide a quality motorized recreation experience and that do not pose significant resource concerns. Several of these additions would increase the quality “time in the saddle” experience by providing longer loop opportunities. The Forest believes there are additional opportunities to provide quality motorized loop routes using old roads and linkages with only minor resource impacts and we will work with the public to identify and analyze those opportunities through this process.

Routes were also closed or seasonally restricted to motorized use to reduce or eliminate resource concerns. The reasons for the changes to individual routes are described in Appendix A.

The proposed action for snowmobile use retains all of the road and trail restrictions for snowmobiles that are displayed on the 2005 Forest Visitors Map. Seasonal closures on the Forest Visitors Maps that essentially span the entire snowmobile season¹² are shown as closed. Table 5 summarizes the proposed changes to areas open for snowmobile use and Table 6 displays the changes proposed in routes open for snowmobile use. Appendix B details the proposed changes to snowmobile access and the rationale behind each change. Generally, the changes proposed are to eliminate motorized use on trails within a short distance of designated wilderness areas and to preclude motorized use to protect wilderness characteristics in selected unroaded areas.

¹¹ The Bitterroot National Forest has approximately 1,596,000 acres, approximately 747,060 of those are in Wilderness. The project area is the remaining approximate 848,940 acres outside of wilderness.

¹² Oct 15 – June 15; Sept. 1 – June 15; Oct. 15 – May 15.

Table 5. Comparison of Proposed and Existing Areas Open to Snowmobile Access

Area	Existing Condition		Proposed Action		Net Change (Acres)
	Acres	% of Area ¹³	Acres	% of Area	
Project Area – (Excludes Wilderness)	753,715	89%	608,031	72%	-17%
Forest Wide – (Includes Wilderness)	753,715	47%	608,031	38%	-9%

Table 6. Comparison of Proposed and Existing Routes Open to Snowmobile within the Project Area.

Access Type	Existing Condition	Proposed Action	Net Change
Groomed Trails (miles)	58	58	0
Open Routes (miles)	430	341	-89

The proposed action will designate all sites where motorized use is allowed, including marking the routes to dispersed campsites on the motor vehicle use map. This is a change from the existing condition on the Forest Visitors Map and Travel Plan that states “Unless currently restricted, cross-country travel to a campsite within 300 feet of a road or trail is permitted by the most direct route causing the least damage.” With the proposed action it will be clear where motorized access to a dispersed site (off a trail or road) is allowed. This proposed change would reduce the potential of new routes popping up within 300 feet of roads or trails, which could occur under the existing condition. The dispersed sites are not included on the proposed action maps because we are collecting accurate GPS information on the location of these sites. Existing motorized routes to dispersed camp sites will be included in the proposed action in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement unless substantial environmental, social or cultural concerns exist.

5.0 FOREST PLAN DIRECTION

This project will meet the Forest Plan goal of providing a broad spectrum of recreation opportunities and providing a safe trail system that protects soil and water resources.

Implementing the proposed action would likely require an amendment to the Bitterroot Forest Plan related to elk habitat effectiveness. The elk habitat effectiveness standard would probably not be met in some areas with this proposal; therefore a Forest Plan Amendment would be needed to implement it. However, the project would likely meet the Forest Plan Objective to “Cooperate with the States of Idaho and Montana to maintain the current level of big-game hunting ... opportunities.” The objective of maintaining the current level of big-game has been and will likely continue to be met and exceeded. Forest Plan monitoring shows a “healthy, increasing elk herd that exceeds [Fish Wildlife and Parks] FWP and Forest Plan population objectives” (USDA Forest Service 2005). This exceeding of the population objectives has occurred even though some drainages do not meet Forest Plan elk habitat effectiveness standards.

The Bitterroot National Forest is revising our Forest Plan to reflect new scientific information as well as natural and social changes that have accumulated since the original plan was prepared, in the 1980s. The

¹³ The Bitterroot National Forest has approximately 1,596,000 acres, approximately 747,060 of those are in Wilderness. The project area is the remaining approximate 848,940 acres outside of wilderness.

Forest Plan Revision will be the culmination of many public discussions. In March 2007 the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California stopped the Forest Service from implementing the 2005 Planning Rule, which is the rule used in development of the revision. The Forest will not release a revised land management plan until issues related to this court decision are resolved.

6.0 HOW TO COMMENT DURING SCOPING

To ensure there is ample time to review and discuss the proposal we are providing a 60 day comment period and request all comments by November 23, 2007 so we can fully consider them in the development of alternatives for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

We encourage you to review this information and let us know your comments on the Proposed Action. Your comments will be most meaningful if they are specific to the proposed action, and to particular routes or areas of concern.

Please mail or hand-deliver written comments to:

Travel Management Planning Team
Stevensville Ranger District
88 Main St.
Stevensville, MT 59870

Office hours are Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Written comments may be faxed to the Stevensville Ranger District at (406) 777-7423. Comments may be submitted electronically (in MSWord or RTF format) to:
comments-northern-bitterroot@fs.fed.us

Comments received during scoping, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for inspection by the public.

This proposal is the first step in our National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental analysis process. We look forward to working with you to develop a mix of motorized and non-motorized opportunities that provide quality experiences and protect natural resources.

7.0 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Travel Management planning documents will be posted on the internet as they become available at:
http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/projects/motorized_rec.shtml

For more information about the proposed action please contact: Dan Ritter, Stevensville District Ranger (406-777-5461), the Project Team Leader Sandy Mack, (406-777-7415) or Deb Gale, Forest Wilderness and Trails Program Manager (406-821-3269).

The Forest will schedule public meetings in November, prior to the end of the public comment period. Meeting times and locations will be announced at a later date.

8.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Areas for non-motorized recreation – Same as “Non-motorized area”. An area with a high probability of experiencing solitude away from motor vehicles; defined as ½ mile or more from a route designated for motorized vehicle use. Other types of motors or sounds may be encountered here. Roads and trails not open to motorized use may also be encountered.

Designated road, trail or area – A National Forest System road, a National Forest System trail, or an area on National Forest System lands that is designated for motor vehicle use pursuant to 36 CFR §212.51. A designation for a road or trail includes all terminal facilities, trailheads, parking lots, and turnouts associated with the designated road or trail. The designation also includes parking within one vehicle width from the edge of the road surface when it is safe to do so.

Highway legal vehicle – Montana State Law mandates the following regulations for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use on all national Forest Roads:

- The OHV must be registered as a motor vehicle at the County Treasurers office (a vehicle title is required, a license plate will be issued).
- The operator of the vehicle must possess a valid driver’s license and a motorcycle/OHV endorsement on their Montana Driver’s License.
- Operators of these vehicles must be in compliance with all applicable laws.
- The vehicle must have a mirror, horn, headlights, and brake lights.
- A safety helmet is required for anyone under 18 years of age, either a driver or passenger, and is and is always a good idea for all OHV riders.

Road – A motor vehicle route over 50 inches wide, unless identified and managed as a trail.

Trail – A route 50 inches or less in width or a route over 50 inches wide that is identified and managed as a trail.

Vehicles 50” or less in width – A vehicle that is 50 inches or less in width at the widest width of the vehicle.

Motorcycles - vehicles with two wheels with “in-line” wheel alignment.

Motorized Mixed Use – Designation of a National Forest System road for use by both highway-legal and non-highway-legal motor vehicles. This has historically been referred to as Dual Use.

Motor Vehicle – Any vehicle which is self-propelled, other than:

- (1) A vehicle operated on rails; and
- (2) Any wheelchair or mobility device, including one that is battery-powered, that is designed solely for use by a mobility-impaired person for locomotion, and that is suitable for use in an indoor pedestrian area.

Non-motorized use – Any use that does not include a motorized vehicle. Non-motorized use can occur on roads or trails open to motorized use.

Non-motorized area – An area with a high probability of experiencing solitude away from motor vehicles; defined as ½ mile or more from a route designated for motorized vehicle use. Other types of motors or sounds may be encountered here. Roads and trails not open to motorized use may also be encountered.

Off-highway vehicle – Any motor vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain.

Snowmobile – A motor vehicle that is designated for use over snow and that runs on a track or tracks and/or a ski or skis, while in use over snow. This is the same definition used for the term “over-snow vehicle” in the 2005 Travel Management Rule.

Unauthorized route – A road or trail that is not a forest road or trail or a temporary road or trail and that is not included in a forest transportation atlas. This includes user-created trails.

User-created route – Any route currently not managed as part of the forest transportation system. These include off-road vehicle tracks which have not been designated and managed as a trail, and which may or may not be legal under the 2001 Tri-State Off-Highway Vehicle Decision. They also include travelways abandoned from the forest transportation system, but that still exist on the ground and continue to receive use by the public. For this project user-created route and unauthorized route are used interchangeably.